Roles

Republicans

Senator For every vote their clients make, the Senator may choose to have it count for 2 votes. Each leveraged client adds +1 chaos token.

Vestal The Vestal is immune from executions and can only vote or veto once per game. Their veto is not limited to their clients. If the Vestal votes on an execution, the execution adds +0 chaos tokens, regardless of any other modifiers. Assassinating the Vestal adds +3 chaos tokens.

Orator Once per game, the Orator can remove up to 2 chaos tokens.

Scapegoat If executed, the Scapegoat adds 0 chaos tokens.

Praetorian Once per game, the Praetorian may choose to either kill in the shadows, or arrest them. Killing adds +2 chaos tokens. Arresting will automatically nominate the player during the next Forum, and the player cannot be protected by their patron's veto. Arresting results in +1 chaos token.

Pontifex Maximus The Pontifex Maximus can veto any execution. The cost for their vetoes escalates. The first veto is +1 chaos token as normal. Each subsequent veto is a further +1 chaos token. (ie the 4th veto is a total of +4 chaos tokens).

Conspirators

Martyr If executed, add +3 chaos tokens. If assassinated, add +0 chaos tokens.

False Tribune Once per game, the False Tribune can remove up to 2 chaos tokens. During the next shadows, the False Tribune can then choose one player to become a conspirator.

Assassin Once per game, the Assassin may choose to kill in the shadows. Assassination adds +1 chaos tokens.

Neutral

Gladiator The Gladiator must have a patron. Once per game, if the Gladiator's patron is nominated for execution, the patron may call for vengeance during the Shadows. The Gladiator may decline and be executed, or accept and the player chosen by the patron is killed by the Gladiator. After the Shadows, the Gladiator's role is made public. Either choice results in +2 chaos tokens.

GAME DESIGN
T E M P L A T E

Introduction

Gravitas is a social deduction game set in Ancient Rome. As with other games of its type, the players are separated into the uninformed majority and informed minority. In this case, these are the loyal republicans, trying to maintain the power of the senate and people of Rome on one side, and conspirators on the other, attempting to overthrow the republic with the goal of making a greater Rome that favours them more.

The game is for 5-10 players, plus a Censor to run the game.

Requirements

Additional to these rules, you would need some way to choose which roles players are. The names of the roles could be written on paper and folded up in a container to choose at random, or they could be playing cards, where each card has had their role pre-assigned (such as Ace of Clubs is the Senator) or alternatively custom cards could be created. Additionally you will need a number of small tokens, such as coins. These will be used to represent the instability of the Roman state.

Setup

Players draw their roles at random, and in secret. The roles are then returned back to the Censor in secret, and the Censor indicates to the conspirators who their fellow conspirators are.

Half of the players also are randomly assigned patrons. Each client can only have a single patron, but it is possible for a patron to have multiple clients, and for a patron to be a client to someone else. It is left up to the Censor to decide the fairest way to assign this. Patronage does not require the players to be on the same side. The players are then informed who their clients and patrons are. This is usually done in public.

Rules

The game is broken into two phases, The Forum, and The Shadows.

While there can be private conversations during The Forum, any actions are public. In contrast, only very few interactions happen in The Shadows, and these are always initiated by the Censor.

The aim of the game for the republicans is to maintain the Republic. They do this by rooting out all dissenters, and executing them. They have to do this while maintaining the goodwill of the people. A broken Rome is a fallen republic. The conspirators are working to undermine this republic. Their goal is to remove all republican officials in charge to the point where they hold a majority, or to upset the republic to the point of rebellion.

Chaos

Every action has a consequence. These consequences are tracked with chaos tokens. The amount of chaos tokens currently in play represent the civil unrest. The game starts with zero chaos tokens in play. Actions will usually add chaos tokens. Some abilities might also remove chaos tokens, but this can never go below 1 token. The maximum amount of chaos tokens before the republic collapses into rebellion is two less than the amount of players (ie. If this is a 10 player game, then the game is safe at 8 tokens, but the conspirators will win as soon as the 9th token would be added)

The Forum

The Censor can decide on an adequate amount of time for the Forum, before calling for any charges or motions to be brought forwards. A suggestion for this might be that 10 minutes for the first open Forum session, to allow players to communicate with each other, followed by subsequent 5 minute phases.

During the end of the Forum phase, players are able to put forward charges. These can be requests for patronage, which their prospective patrons can either agree to or decline, and motions to execute someone. After the first execution, or a unanimous agreement to not execute, the Forum phase ends and the Shadows begins.

Execution

The accusor will state their case as to why they believe the accused should perish, and the accused shall defend themselves. After this a vote is called and a majority of alive players will cause the player to be executed. Unless otherwise noted, all executions will add +1 chaos tokens.

Patronage

A client is expected to vote along with their patron. This is not a binding contract, and clients can vote contrary to their patron, usually if discussed beforehand. However if voting against the wishes of the patron, this might displease the patron, which could be problematic as patrons are able to veto executions on their clients.

Vetoes

Patrons can veto executions on their clients. This will still result in the same +1 chaos token, but it keeps clients in the game, and able to continue voting. Certain other roles are able to veto in other circumstances.

The Shadows

Once all actions have been completed in the Forum, then the Shadows phase begins. In this phase, players will be approached in secret by the Censor with the chance to activate some of their abilities. If no execution occurs during the Forum, then during the Shadows each living Conspirator may choose to add +1 chaos tokens.